

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COLOMB 01120 091103Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2534

USDOC WASHDC

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

UNCLAS COLOMBO 1120

E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: BTOI, CE

SUBJ: SRI LANKA EXPORT FAIR

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO OPIC (V.P. GERALD MORGAN)

1. SUMMARY: SRI LANKA EXPORT FAIR, MAY 3 THROUGH MAY 10 IN COLOMBO, IS TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH CANTON SPRING FAIR. AMERICAN POTENTIAL INVESTORS AND EXPORTERS TO SRI LANKA SHOULD BE INFORMED THAT THIS WILL PROVIDE GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO INVESTIGATE SRI LANKA'S LIMITED BUT REAL OPPORTUNITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. SRI LANKA'S POTENTIAL FOR AMERICAN SALES AND FOR INVESTMENT REMAINS LIMITED (SEE ECONOMIC TRENDS REPORT, JANUARY 1975), BUT WE BELIEVE THERE ARE SOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN FIRMS WHOSE REPRESENTATIVES CAN VISIT SRI LANKA TO EXAMINE MARKET AND INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN DETAIL. GSL HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY ENERGETIC IN PROMOTING INVESTMENT IN NON-TRADITIONAL (OTHER THAN TEA, RUBBER, COCONUT) EXPORT SECTORS. PRIMARY AREAS ARE LIGHT MANUFACTURING; AGRICULTURAL CONSUMER PRODUCTS; FISHERIES AND SEAFOODS; AND, MORE RECENTLY LARGE-SCALE AGRICULTURAL ENDEAVORS IN SUCH CROPS AS SOYBEANS AND PINEAPPLE.

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PAGE 02 COLOMB 01120 091103Z

3. WITH FOREGOING IN MIND, WE HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH GSL EXPORT PROMOTION SECRETARIAT (EPS), HEADED BY DR. SIVALI RATWATTE (PRIME MINISTER'S BROTHER). EPS IS SPONSORING SRI LANKA EXPORT FAIR FROM AY 3 TO MAY 10 IN COLOMBO. S TITLE INDICATES, FAIR IS TO PROMOTE CEYLONESE EXPORTS BUT ASSEMBLY OF PERSONNEL AND PRODUCTS FROM OVER 90 SRI LANKA FIRMS WILL PROVIDE GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICAN POTENTIAL INVESTORS AND POSSIBLE EXPORTERS OF LIGHT CAPITAL EQUIPMENT TO SEE AND DISCUSS WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE HERE.

4. WE BELIVE IT WOULD BE IN U.S. INTEREST AND COULD BENEFIT AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN FOR COMMERCE, OTHER WASHINGTON AGENCIES, AND ADDRESSEE POSTS TO INFORM AMERICANS TRAVELING IN SOUTH ASIA IN CONNECTION WITH CANTON FAIR OR OTHERWISE OF OPPORTUNITY SRI LANKA EXPORT FAIR PROVIDES. ALTHOUGH FAIR WILL BE SMALL ON BY INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS, GSL EPS WOULD ESPECIALLY WELCOME AMERICAN VISITORS, AND EMBASSY COMMERCIAL OFFICERS WOULD GIVE ALL POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE. WE WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING OF ANY POSITIVE RESPONSE AND OF AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN PLANNING VISIT DURING FAIR PERIOD. VAN HOLLEN

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